



For Immediate Release

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Sunbeam Awarded \$107,525 from Department of Justice ***Grant Supports Victims of Crime***

(OKLAHOMA CITY) – Sunbeam Family Services was awarded Sub-grant Number: 108, a \$107,525 grant to support victims of crime, by the Department of Justice - Office for Victims of Crime (VOCA). The grant runs through Sept. 30, 2021. Funds from this grant will support Sunbeam’s Mental Health and Senior Shelter programs.

“We have seen an increased number of people needing support related to abuse and neglect throughout the course of the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Sunbeam Clinical Supervisor Emma Wassilak, M.Ed., LPC-S. “Sunbeam has been diligent in collaborating with our partner, Palomar, by communicating on a near-daily basis to ensure people needing services are able to access them safely, quickly and easily. Leadership from both Sunbeam and Palomar are continuously looking to identify more ways we can provide additional supportive services.”

Sunbeam's Senior Shelter is the only shelter equipped to assist seniors who are experiencing homelessness. During their stay, residents receive home-cooked meals and comprehensive case management, including an individualized plan developed to support them in their path toward permanency. In partnership with Legal Aid, seniors can also receive legal support to seek services such as assistance with filing a victim protective order (VPO). The shelter is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and is supported by therapists from Sunbeam's Mental Health program.

“Oklahomans need a safe place to process their experience and get the help they need on their journey towards healing,” said Sunbeam Chief Executive Officer Sarah Rahhal, LCSW. “VOCA enables people without other resources to access high-quality trauma-informed, evidence-based treatment to support them in this process. Thanks to the funding support from the District Attorney's office, we are able to provide this much needed assistance to those who have been impacted by crime.”

The Senior Shelter recently received a phone call from Mary, who was sleeping in her car in a gas station. She was distraught and felt defeated. Mary left her home because she was being verbally abused and financially exploited by her three children. The case manager immediately worked with Areawide Aging Agency to refer Mary to the Senior Shelter. Once at the Senior Shelter, she was connected with Legal Aid, who helped revoke her children’s Power of Attorney. With the help of the case manager at the Senior Shelter, Mary is now ready to move into a new apartment while Legal Aid and Adult Protective Services are supporting legal needs.

For more than 50 years, Sunbeam has improved the overall health of our community by providing accessible and affordable mental health services. Sunbeam’s Mental Health program offers help and hope to individuals and families by providing high-quality mental health services through individual, couples, family and play

therapy. Throughout the pandemic, Sunbeam has collaborated with community organizations, like Palomar and Boys and Girls Club, to provide onsite mental health services to their clients.

For more information about Sunbeam, visit Sunbeamfamilyservices.org or call (405) 528-7721.

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About Sunbeam Family Services

Founded in 1907, Sunbeam Family Services is one of Oklahoma's longest serving nonprofits. The nonprofit helps children, families and seniors learn, grow and thrive. To learn more, call (405) 528-7721, visit sunbeamfamilyservices.org, or join the conversation on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.